

[7 August, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

was granted for a period upto 27.6.2003. Further, on the request of the unit, Government has also approved the change of location from Karaikal, Pondicherry to Kakinada Port (Peddapuram R.B. Patnam, East Godavari) in Andhra Pradesh on 16.8.2000.

Subsidies Protect to Rural Women's Interest

1727. SHRI CM. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to seek exemption to provide subsidies to women, especially in rural areas, involved in income generation at the lower economic strata, and to evolve mechanisms to protect women entrepreneurs and workers from the adverse effect of World Trade Organisation regime;

(b) whether Government propose to take up the issue of setting up a "gender box" action to the "green box" in the World Trade Organisation regime at the next round of negotiations to achieve this objective; and

(c) the details of decision, if any, has been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI DIGVJJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) The WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures permits developing countries, having annual per capita income of less than \$1000, to provide subsidies upto 3 per cent *de minimis* level without attracting countervailing action. The WTO Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) prohibits institution of any new export subsidies, but it permits the developing countries to reduce the cost of marketing exports, including handling, upgarding and other processing costs, and the costs of international and domestic transport and freight. AoA also permits the developing countries to give product specific and non-product specific domestic support upto 10 per cent of the value of agricultural production without undertaking any reduction commitments as well as investment and input subsidies provided to Low income resource poor farmers'.

At present there is no proposal with the Government for creation of a "gender box". However, India in its proposals submitted to the WTO for the ongoing negotiations under the Agreement on Agriculture, has demanded creation of a "Food Security Box" so as to take care of its food security and livelihood concerns and has, *inter alia*, sought sufficient flexibility for domestic

policy measures taken by the developing country members for alleviation of poverty, rural development, rural employment and diversification of agriculture, Further, Government can provide adequate protection to women entrepreneurs and workers by resorting to various WTO compatible measures which include appropriate calibration of applied tariffs within the bound tariffs, imposition of anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguard action under certain specified circumstances.

Export of Sugar to Pakistan

† 1728. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether with a view to promoting the export of sugar in the country and agenda has been fixed for the discussion of restoring the export of sugar to Pakistan in the Indo-Pak summit to be held after the arrival of General Parvez Musharraf; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Suicide by unemployed persons in Coimbatore

† 1729. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in Rashtriya Sahara of 2nd May, 2001 pertaining to committing of suicide by the 500 people in Coimbatore, who became unemployed due to globalization;

(b) if so, Government's reaction in this regard; and

(c) what action has been taken by Government for providing employment and immediate financial assistance to the kith and kin of aggrieved families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) Import restrictions have been continuously removed since 1991, as part of economic liberalization

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.